

# 1305 thoughts about Public Citizen

Recently, 1305 members and supporters of Public Citizen responded to a survey question asking whether they have personal stories and/or why they care about the work Public Citizen does.

It was enlightening and inspiring to sift through all of the comments. Many harkened back to the 1971 founding of Public Citizen by consumer advocate Ralph Nader. Others raised contemporary concerns on issues such as the increasing amount of money [in the political process](#), so-called “trade” agreements like [the Trans-Pacific Partnership \(TPP\)](#), and fighting the power of Big Pharma.

Some told stories of losing their jobs because of their sexuality, taking a pay cut when a state governor believed they were overpaid, having a hard time getting benefits from health insurance companies, and much more.

Others shared more positive stories. One writer said that Public Citizen prompted him to run for an Idaho State Senate Seat and win the Democratic Party’s primary election. Another said that he uses Public Citizen’s materials to teach “medical students and house staff regularly.”

Two commenters praised Public Citizen’s publications: one commenter said that our ‘[Health Newsletter](#)’ has been important to them “personally and politically,” while another said that our [member newspaper](#) kept them “well informed.” One person from Virginia was even more specific, saying they enjoy “watching the Public Citizen President Mr. Weissman on TV appearances” and the “webcasts and conference calls with Rick [Claypool] and Kelly [Ngo].”

Here are some of my favorite comments from Public Citizen members and supporters:

Shannon from Kansas City, Kansas:

There is so much misinformation swirling around that organizations like Public Citizen are essential if only to balance the message out. Facts, discussion, respect and engagement are my watchwords for political and public action. Like many people I’m busy in my life with a full-time job and other responsibilities in my community and often feel powerless to change our dysfunctional governing bodies. I appreciate what you do out of passion and dedication and often at the expense of ‘cashing in’ as we see so many of our public officials doing.

Dana from Eden Prairie, Minnesota:

Public Citizen offers well written, critically thought activist pieces that are important in the American political realm. It doesn’t send out cherry-picked, one-sided, pieces that enrage their readers/supporters with no rationalization as to why said readers should be angry (although their readers, I’m sure, are usually angry), like other social activist groups tend to send. I’ve been impressed with the work I’ve seen Public Citizen do over the years and I intend to support them in the future.

Sherry from Seattle, Washington:

I am very appreciative of the efforts of Public Citizen to make our government more democratic and responsive to the average citizen, not just corporations. I am impressed with the quality of the research and the knowledge of the Public Citizen organizers.

Deborah from Bethesda, Maryland:

Before Public Citizen got involved in the healthcare for all fight, we had few participants in active lobbying. With Public Citizen's involvement, the will of the people is now being expressed loud and clear in Congress.

Marcia from Frankfort, Michigan:

Public Citizen is impressive in its focus on campaign finance reform and amending the constitution to correct the abuses of the US Supreme Court. You have it right and making that change is the only way we can begin to correct other failings of our elected officials.

Barbara from San Allens, West Virginia:

Public Citizen works on some of the issues I care strongly about. They helped us in West Virginia to get resolutions against corporate personhood passed in several cities and counties, as well as in both houses of the state legislature in 2013.

Leigh from Grenada Hill, California:

Public Citizen is one of those few groups not beholden to the corporate multinationals. They don't have to be "cautious" about what they say or when they say. They can protest effectively because they are interested in truth and justice, not "deals."

Janet from Woodland Park, New Jersey:

Public Citizen does the work that our elected officials should be doing to protect their constituents through legislation — i.e., safe food, clean air and water, safe products, more regulated banking, etc.

Mary from Los Angeles, California:

I like that Public Citizen continues to dedicate so much time to the influence of money in our political process. I feel that I have no influence on the behavior of Congress and it gives me some hope that the voice of Public Citizen challenges the impact of Citizens United and the McCutcheon rulings on our democracy. Don't give up ever!

Share your stories, ideas, thoughts, suggestions and praise [by completing Public Citizen's survey](#).

***Burkely Hermann is a summer intern for Public Citizen's Congress Watch division and part of Public Citizen's Online Action Team***

<http://www.citizenvox.org/2014/07/22/1305-thoughts-about-public-citizen/>